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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in troubled times, we need You during this season of challenge. Our lawmakers need Your presence to help them build bridges that will keep our Nation strong and to forge alliances that will glorify You. Filled with Your wisdom, may our Senators find solutions to the complex problems we face.

With gratitude for all the blessings and benefits You generously bestow, help us to reveal our appreciation by living with honor. Keep us from taking for granted the faithful service of the many unsung heroes and heroines who support our Senators, and reward them for their willingness to make daily sacrifices for liberty. During this time of armed conflict, we also pray for our courageous men and women in harm's way.

We lift this prayer in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1323, which is a bill to express the sense of the Senate on shared sacrifice in resolving the budget deficit, with 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled. The filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to S. 1323 is 10 a.m. this morning.

At approximately 10:40, there will be up to two rollcall votes. The first will be a motion to invoke cloture on S. 1323, the piece of legislation I just spoke about. The second rollcall vote will be on a motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and related agencies appropriations bill.

ECONOMIC TEAMWORK

Mr. REID. Madam President, sometimes it is very hard to find common ground in Washington. But there is one thing on which Republicans and Democrats agree: It is absolutely necessary that Congress prevent a catastrophic

default on the Nation's debt that would put our economy at grave risk. I have said it, and so have my Republican colleagues.

The business community is shouting out very loudly the same thing. This week, business leaders wrote to Congress—in fact, it was yesterday—and the White House to ask us to put our differences aside and avert a default crisis before it is too late. Literally hundreds of CEOs, including executives of some of the Nation's largest companies and the most respected business groups, signed the letter—more than 300. They wrote, "This is a risk our country must not take." They said that if we don't reach a deal soon, the stock market will be in "disarray." We all know that. We all know we cannot afford to have our country crash. Our economy is already struggling to stay on course to recovery. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce president Tom Donahue, who signed the letter, also said earlier this week that a default would have "dire consequences for our economy, our markets, and Main Street Americans."

Business leaders are begging us to do something and to do it quickly. That is why I was shocked to hear the Speaker of the House say yesterday that averting a default crisis was President Obama's problem, not his. That is not what he said a few months ago when he urged us to "deal like adults" with the problem. It wasn't what he said when he voted to raise the debt ceiling seven times while George W. Bush was President, increasing the debt limit by \$4 trillion. In fact, when the Speaker voted to increase the debt limit by nearly \$1 trillion one time alone in 2003, he didn't demand that it be accompanied by massive spending cuts or any spending cuts. Instead, a Republican Congress approved hundreds of billions of dollars in tax cuts for the wealthy, which contributed to our massive debt, and they were all on borrowed money. All those massive tax

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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